

Reference to Microfiche Appendix. A microfiche appendix, containing 3 microfiche and

150 total frames is filed herewith. The microfiche appendix includes the computer source code of one preferred embodiment of the invention.

On page 2, line 12, before "A. Field of Invention", please insert the following:

This application is a Continuation of United States Patent Application Serial Number

09/943,544, filed October 3, 1997.

On page 3, line 8, after "communication", please delete "system" and insert - -systems- -.

On page 3, line 9, after "systems", please delete "which".

On page 7, line 4, after "software", please delete "in" and insert - -is- -.

On page 7, line 5, please delete "appended".

On page 7, line 6, before "appendix" please insert - -microfiche- -.

On page 7, line 10, before "appendix" please insert - -microfiche- -.

On page 16, line 19, please delete "10a-1" and insert - -10a-k- -.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-40, without prejudice.

Please add claims 41-73, as follows:

41. A communications system for communicating between an information provider and users at client computers on a computer network, the system comprising:

a satellite receiver operating to receive download data from the information provider;

a plurality of client computers on a computer network;

a server computer in electronic communication with said satellite receiver and in electronic communication with the computer network, said server computer operating to receive

the download data from said satellite receiver and operating to route the download data to said plurality of client computers via the computer network.

42. The communications system as defined in claim 41 wherein said computer network is a local area network.

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43. The communications system as defined in claim 41 wherein said computer network is a wide area network.

44. The communications system as defined in claim 42 wherein said server computer is programmed to route the download data to said plurality of client computers on the local area network irrespective of the client computers' operating systems such that said server computer does not require the same operating system for each client computer of the plurality of client computers.

45. The communications system as defined in claim 42 further comprising a storage medium wherein said server computer's routing of the download data includes storing the download data on said storage medium.

46. The communications system as defined in claim 45 wherein said storage medium is included in said server computer.

47. The communications system as defined in claim 45 wherein said storage medium is an intermediate storage medium and wherein the download data is stored on said intermediate storage medium prior to receipt of the download data by said plurality of client computers.

48. The communications system as defined in claim 47 wherein said intermediate storage medium includes a cache.

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49. The communications system as defined in claim 42 wherein said server computer runs a server operating system.

50. The communications system as defined in claim 49 wherein said server operating system is a Linux-based operating system.

51. The communications system as defined in claim 49 wherein said server operating system is a Unix-based operating system.

52. The communications system as defined in claim 49 wherein said server operating system is a Netware-based operating system.

53. The communications system as defined in claim 49 wherein said server operating system is a Microsoft Windows-based operating system.

54. The communications system as defined in claim 49 wherein said server operating system is a Microsoft Windows NT-based operating system.

55. The communications system as defined in claim 42 wherein said server computer routes the download data using a standard local area network protocol.

56. The communications system as defined in claim 42 wherein the system provides bi-directional electronic communications between said plurality of client computers on the local area network and the information provider, the electronic communications including both the reception of the download data and transmission of upload data, and wherein the system further comprises a communications device in electronic communications with said server computer.

57. The communications system as defined in claim 56 wherein said plurality of client computers send the upload data to the information provider by the upload data being sent to said server computer by said plurality of client computers through the local area network, the upload data being provided to said communications device by said server computer, and the upload data being sent to the information provider via said communications device.

58. The communications system as defined in claim 42 comprising a plurality of local area networks wherein said server computer operates to route the download data to said plurality of local area networks.

59. A server computer for communicating between a global communications network and client computers on a computer network, the server computer comprising:
network hardware for connecting said server computer to the computer network;
communications hardware for enabling electronic communications with a satellite receiver;
a processor; and
a computer readable medium containing:
network instructions for communications between said server computer and the computer network;
satellite instructions for communications between said server computer and the satellite receiver;
router instructions, said router instructions operating to receive download data from the global communications network and operating to route the download data to a plurality of client computers; and
wherein said network instructions, said satellite instructions and said router instructions are executable by said processor.

60. The server computer as defined in claim 59 wherein said computer network is a local area network.

61. The server computer as defined in claim 59 wherein said computer network is a wide area network.

62. The server computer as defined in claim 60 wherein said router instructions route the download data to said plurality of client computers on the local area network irrespective of the client computers' operating systems such that said server computer does not require the same operating system for each client computer of the plurality of client computers.

63. The server computer as defined in claim 60 further comprising a storage medium wherein said server computer's routing of the download data includes storing the download data on said storage medium.

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64. The server computer as defined in claim 63 wherein said storage medium is included in said server computer.

65. The server computer as defined in claim 63 wherein said storage medium is an intermediate storage medium and wherein the download data is stored on said intermediate storage medium prior to receipt of the download data by said plurality of client computers.

66. The server computer as defined in claim 65 wherein said intermediate storage medium includes a cache.

67. The server computer as defined in claim 60 wherein said server computer runs a server operating system.

68. The server computer as defined in claim 67 wherein said server computer routes the download data using a standard local area network protocol.

69. The server computer as defined in claim 60 wherein said server computer operates to route the download data to a plurality of local area networks.

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Amend 370. A server computer for providing access to a global communications network for a plurality of client computers on a computer network, the server computer comprising:

a network interface;

a satellite receiver interface;

a processor; and

at least one storage device, said storage device containing:

a network driver;

a satellite driver; and

router instructions, said router instructions operating to receive download data from the global communications network through a satellite receiver and through the satellite receiver interface and operating to route the download data to a plurality of client computers through the network interface, and wherein said router instructions are executable by said processor.

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Amend 71 A server computer for providing access to a global communications network for a plurality of client computers on a computer network, the server computer comprising:

a network interface;

a satellite receiver interface;

a processor; and

non-volatile memory, said non-volatile memory containing:

a network driver;

a satellite driver; and

router instructions, said router instructions operating to receive download data from the global communications network through a satellite receiver and through the satellite receiver interface and operating to route the download data to a plurality of client computers through the network interface, and wherein said router instructions are executable by said processor.

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72. A method for providing access to a global communications network for a plurality of client computers on a computer network, which comprises:

receiving download data from a satellite receiver in electronic communication with a server computer; and

routing the download data from the server computer to the plurality of client computers via the computer network.

73. A computer-readable medium containing instructions for providing access to a global communications network for a plurality of client computers on a computer network, wherein the instructions comprise executable instructions for implementing a method comprising:

receiving download data from a satellite receiver in electronic communication with a server computer; and

routing the download data to the plurality of client computers via the computer network.